

Chapter 8 Prisoners

- The majority of individuals who were diagnosed with AIDS while in prison are men (88%) and were infected with HIV through injection drug use (86%).

Alive AIDS cases among incarcerated populations housed at state correctional facilities total 282. Figure 8.1 represents only those individuals diagnosed with AIDS while in prison. Therefore the actual number of incarcerated individuals with AIDS is most likely much higher.

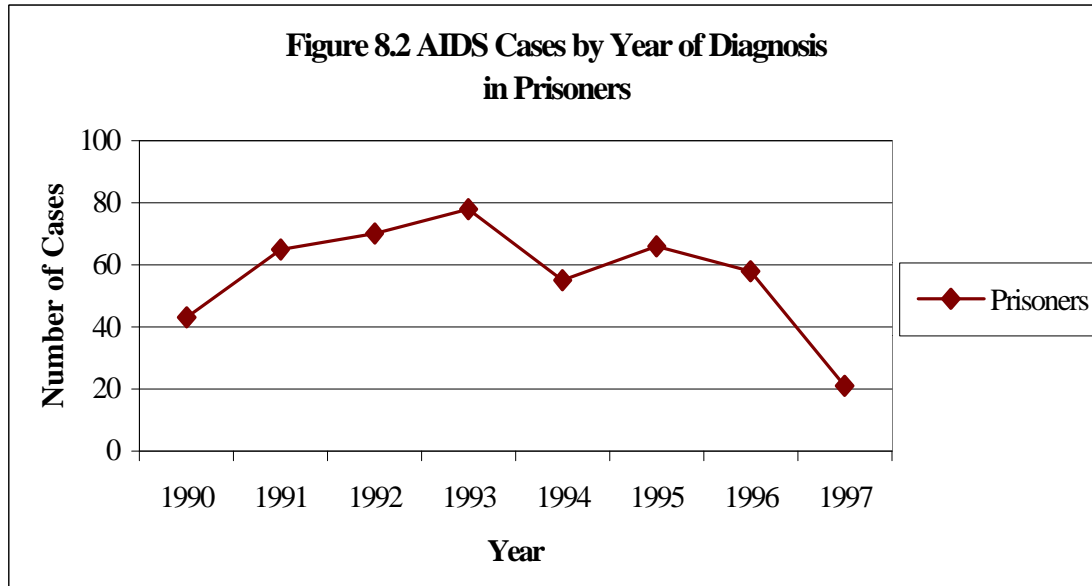
Figure 8.1 Alive AIDS Cases by Sex, Age Category, Race/Ethnicity, and Transmission Mode for Prisoners

Alive AIDS Cases (Alive as of 7/1/98) N=282	
Sex	
Male	249 (88%)
Female	33 (12%)
Age Category	
0-12	0 (0%)
13-24	7 (2%)
25-44	257 (91%)
45+	18 (6%)
Race/Ethnicity	
White	90 (32%)
Black	67 (24%)
Hispanic	125 (44%)
Transmission Mode	
MSM	4 (1%)
IDU	242 (86%)
MSM/IDU	11 (4%)
HTSX	8 (3%)
Presumed HTSX	11 (4%)
Other	6 (2%)

Among individuals living with AIDS who were diagnosed while in prison, 86% were reported to have been infected with HIV via injection drug use. Additionally, 88% of these individuals are men. Although women account for only 5% of the prison population, they make up 12% of alive AIDS cases among prisoners. Black individuals are represented among AIDS cases in prison in approximately equal proportion to their representation among prisoners, while Hispanic

individuals account for 44% of the prison-diagnosed AIDS cases, but only 18% of the prison population.

Figure 8.2 shows the number of cases among prisoners by year of diagnosis.



Rapid Assessment of Prevalence (RAP) studies were carried out at the Department of Corrections (DOC) intake facilities and at jails in six counties for three to four months each during 1995, 1996, and 1997. Risk data were not available for the RAP study. Findings from the studies include:

- At the prison sites in 1997, there was a 5.2% (54/1,030) seroprevalence rate in men at two intake facilities, and a 5.5% (4/73) seroprevalence rate for women at one intake facility.
- Overall HIV seroprevalence is greater in prison than county jail sites.
- Overall HIV seroprevalence is greater in women than men at prison and county jail sites.
- From 1995 through 1997 HIV seroprevalence rates remained constant among men, but decreased among women at prison and county jail sites. For 1997, women intakes into the prison system had a lower seroprevalence than men.
- Stratified by age group, overall HIV seroprevalence is greatest among intakes 30-39 years old. From 1995 to 1997, however, the highest seroprevalence for males was observed in those entering prison at age 40 or over.
- Overall HIV seroprevalence is greater in people of color than in Whites.
- Among DOC intakes, syphilis rates increased for both men and women over the course of the RAP studies.

HIV testing is voluntary among prisoners in Massachusetts. In 1997, 2,929 clients were tested by the state Department of Correction (DOC), up from 1996 when 2,768 clients were tested. HIV seropositivity was 3% in 1997 and 1996, a 50% increase since 1995. Most of the clients testing in the DOC were male (78%) and 47% were White, 24% were Black, and 26% were

Hispanic. Seropositivity rates for White, Black, and Hispanic clients were 2%, 3%, and 4%, respectively. Over 75% of the clients were between the ages of 20-39 years. The percentage of clients reporting injection drug use as their primary risk increased from 20% in 1996 to 25% in 1997. However, the seroprevalence rate of these clients has decreased by 20%, from 5% in 1996 to 4% in 1997. Sex with multiple partners was reported by 31% of prison clients as their primary risk.